

Washington, DC – Late last night the House passed an amendment introduced by Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore) that would help with the cleanup of unexploded bombs and shells leftover from military training exercises. The amendment, which was offered to the 2009 Defense Authorization Bill, H.R.5658, would require the Secretary of Defense to prioritize the research and development of technology used to detect unexploded ordinances (UXOs). It would also require the Department of Defense (DOD) to support the training and use of this new technology in the field. H.R.5658 passed by a vote of 384-23.

“We all take great pride in our nation’s military, but their training exercises result in unexploded bombs and shells being left behind on millions of acres of land,” said Congressman Blumenauer. “This puts both citizens and the environment at risk. With today’s technology, it will take us more than \$20 billion and between 200-300 years to clean up our 3,500 munitions sites. My amendment will help generate new technologies that will reduce both cleanup cost and time and may have broader application in IED and mine detection around the world.”

The Department of Defense estimates that over 39 million acres of formerly used defense sites are still contaminated with UXOs.

Blumenauer voted in favor of the “FY09 Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act, H.R. 5658, which:

- Authorizes funding for National Guard equipment: \$9.7 billion for National Guard and reserve equipment, 9% more than requested
- Raises pay for military personnel by 3.9%, half a percentage point higher than requested
- Replaces equipment depleted by the Iraq and Afghanistan wars
- Cuts funding for the Missile Defense Program by \$719 million (7%) less than the administration's request.
- Cuts Future Combat Systems -- the Army's next generation of combat vehicles and weapons systems -- by \$3.4 billion. The total is \$200 million (6%) less than requested.
- Requires Energy and Sustainability Reports on energy efficiency, fuel logistics, and use of solar power.
- Promotes use of sustainable design concepts.
- Prohibits the use of funds to establish permanent military bases in Iraq.